

These notes were prepared by Wendy Cowey and formed the basis of a booklet on how to observe NALP lessons and give feedback to teachers.

## Purpose of lesson support sessions

Sessions where coordinators/consultants observe teachers working in their classrooms are designed to provide support for the teacher in implementing the Accelerated Literacy teaching strategies. Such lessons also provide an opportunity for coordinators/consultants to learn from excellent teachers. Observation sessions not intended to be assessment or evaluation of that teacher's work.

The lesson support sheet provides a framework for discussions between Accelerated Literacy coordinators/consultants and teachers. It is not meant to be an exhaustive checklist but rather to provide some points for engaging in dialogue with AL teachers for the mutual support of the teacher and the goals of the program to improve literacy outcomes for all students.

## Layout of 'lesson support sheet'

The sheet is comprised of the following sections:

- 1. General Information: name of teacher and details about the class**
- 2. Before the lesson: about the goals for teacher and observer**
- 3. During the lesson: what happens in the lesson**
- 4. After the lesson: discussion and support**

The notes that follow are intended to provide support for coordinators/consultants in using the sheets. They consist of two parts:

Part 1 consists of guidelines for filling out each section of the support sheet with examples.

Part 2 consists of:

- Discussion of points to consider when providing support to teachers.
- Some 'frequently asked questions' (FAQs) that may emerge during discussions with teachers.

# Guidelines for using the Accelerated Literacy Lesson Support Sheet

## Part One: How to fill out the sheet

### 1. General Information

#### Rationale

This part of the sheet provides space for the teacher's name, date, text, school and year level. It is intended for record keeping as well as to assist the observer with background about the teacher, the class and the lesson itself.

The information about the number of professional development sessions completed is intended to provide information about the teacher's participation in training for Accelerated Literacy.

The information about the total lessons taught provides information about where the lesson to be observed comes in a lesson sequence. Lesson filmed is for record keeping purposes also.

#### Guidelines:

##### Example:

Teacher: <i>(name)</i>	Date: 23/11/06	Text: <i>Why the Bear has a Stumpy Tail.</i>	
School: <i>(name)</i>	Year Level:		
Professional Development Completed:	1	2	3
Total lessons taught on this text: 15	Lesson filmed: <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No		

#### Professional Development Completed

This information will guide an observer in providing feedback on particular strategies as below:

- For teachers who have participated in PD 1, support would be focused on implementing literate orientation strategies.
- For teachers who have participated in PD 1 and 2, support would be focused on Transformations and Spelling.
- For teachers who have completed all three PD sessions, support would be focused on implementing writing strategies.

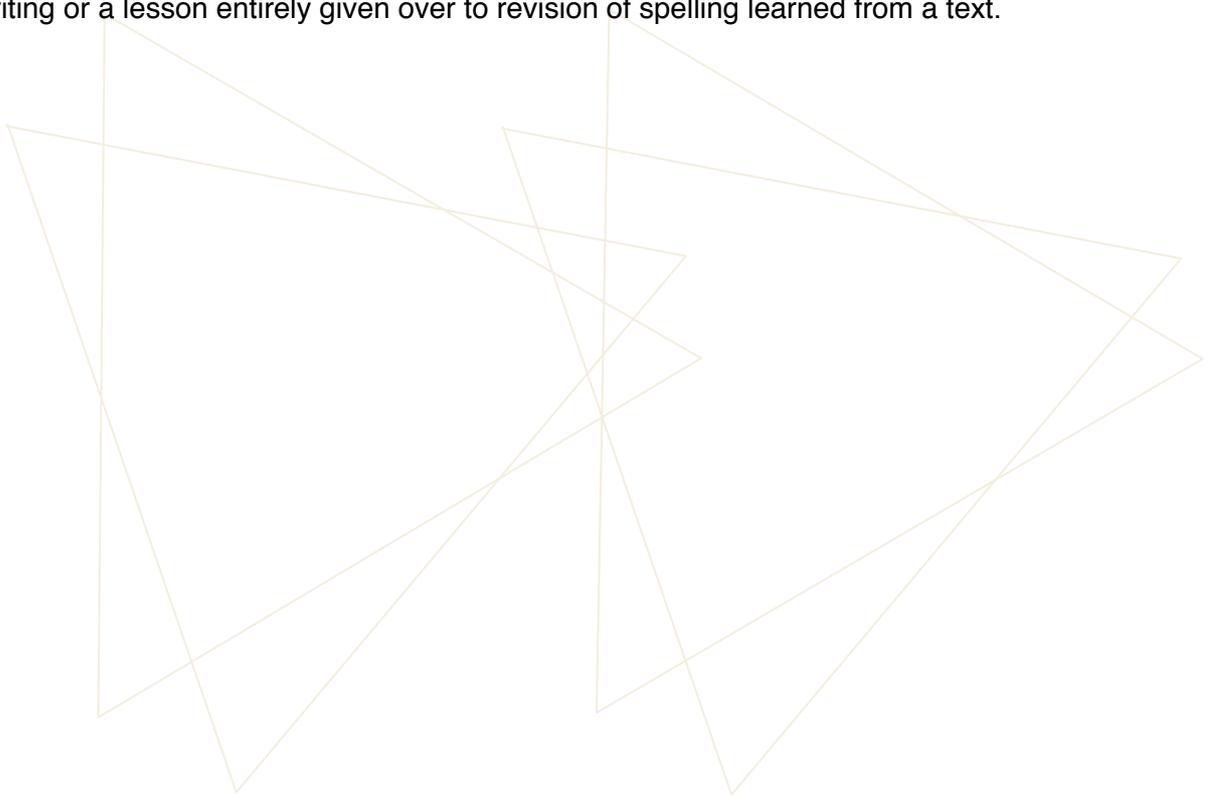
There is no need to be rigid about this sequence, however. If a teacher who has completed all three PDs wants support with literate orientation for example, you would provide it.

### Total lessons taught on this text

Provide an estimate of where the lesson being observed fits relative to an overall sequence of lessons on a text. The time spent teaching a text sets up expectations about the lesson goals and emphases. For example, lesson 1 in a teaching sequence more time may be spent on Low Order Literate Orientation than for lesson 25 in a sequence.

Different pupil/teacher interactions would also take place in lessons later in a teaching sequence compared with interactions earlier in a sequence. For example, earlier in a teaching sequence there may be more preformulation of questions while later in a sequence of lessons there may be little or no preformulation as students and teacher will have a shared understandings about the text from previous lessons.

Later in a teaching sequence, writing sessions may pay a much bigger part in lessons. There may be lessons where there is a short Low Order Literate Orientation followed by writing or a lesson entirely given over to revision of spelling learned from a text.



## 2. Before the Lesson

### Rationale:

Before lesson discussion puts teacher and observer at ease and establishes the collegial nature of the process. It allows shared goals to be established and both teacher and observer to clarify their roles.

If a teacher does not want to be observed then little can be achieved by insisting. Suggest team teaching where the teacher takes the part of the lesson she/he is most confident about teaching. Offer to observe just part of the lesson.

### Guidelines:

#### Example:

##### Before the lesson

<b>Lesson goals:</b> To show how the author of <i>The Cay</i> foreshadowed what the book was going to be about by starting the narrative with a dramatic event.
<b>Support goals:</b> How to encourage students to participate in discussion.

#### Lesson goals:

Many decisions teachers make in the course of a lesson will depend on their goals, particularly later in a lesson sequence. It is difficult to observe a lesson competently without knowing its purpose. If there are questions the teacher has about what to do in the lesson discuss them too.

#### Support goals:

Before the lesson, look at some IL and WL results for the students in the class where possible. Which students have made good progress, which students are making limited progress. Why? Keep the students' literacy learning and achievements central to the process so that you and the teacher approach the lesson as colleagues working towards a common educational purpose; improving the literacy levels of students.

Ask about any AL teaching strategies they would like support with. Teachers with long experience in the program and successful results may feel there is no help they need in which case a 'support goal' may be to observe highly successful teaching. There is the potential to learn more about how teachers use the program here with a view to filming lessons with this teacher or giving positive feedback.

#### Additional issues related to lesson filming:

- Record whether the lesson was filmed on the sheet for future reference and the film remains the property of the teacher.
- If lessons are filmed then a time has to be found to watch and discuss them with the teacher. For such discussion to be helpful, the coordinator/ consultant needs time to watch the film beforehand so that the reflections on the lesson can be carefully considered and framed to be positive and helpful for the teacher.

### 3. During the lesson

#### Rationale

This section of the support sheet concerns what happens in the lesson itself. It will be the observer's responsibility to make perceptive and helpful observations about what is actually happening as the lesson is taught: to look past surface issues and perceive how subject matter is presented and how the teacher interacts with the class to give them access to the information they need to be successful, literate students; all in the flow of the lesson.

On the lesson support sheet itself, the left side is given to the timing of the lesson and a summary of the AL teaching strategy itself. The right hand side is given over to what may appear to be a fairly basic check-list that identifies some points that may aid later discussion about the lesson. The points listed for discussion also allow observers to focus on what are actually some of the important features of AL lessons that distinguish them from 'just good teaching.'

The task of the observer in this part of the lesson support process is to look for how the teacher uses the AL strategies they have been taught to use in PD sessions to achieve their teaching goals. Choose one or two points as a focus. Any more will cause overload and have limited usefulness.

#### Guidelines

##### Example:

##### During the lesson

Time	Accelerated Literacy Strategy	Progress of Lesson	Comments
------	-------------------------------	--------------------	----------

The 'during the lesson' section of the sheet is designed to provide information about:

##### Time

This column heading allows observers to record the time each part of the teaching sequence started so that it is easy to calculate how long was spent on each teaching strategy.

Write the time the teacher starts each strategy in the space provided eg.

Start 11.25 am Low Order Literate Orientation

Time 11.45 am Read story ~~to~~/with students

Start 12.00 High Order Literate Orientation

- If the lesson has been filmed, recording the time each strategy started helps the observer to locate significant parts of the tape easily.
- There is no 'correct' length of time that should be spent on each teaching each strategy. Early in a sequence of lessons, there may be greater time spent on Low Order Literate Orientation, for example; later in a teaching sequence High Order Literate Orientation or Transformations may be omitted and extra time spent on spelling and writing. The time spent on each strategy becomes significant if the teacher is finding it difficult to teach writing because there is no time left in the lesson or if Low Order Literate Orientation is taking up half an hour every day.

- The time spent on each strategy in the teaching sequence will be related to the goals of the lesson.

### Accelerated Literacy teaching strategy

This column has space for the observer to make short summary notes that relate to the development of the lesson. These notes will serve as a reminder of significant interactions in the lesson during each part of the lesson.

#### Example:

Time	Accelerated Literacy Strategy
Start	<b>Low Order Literate Orientation</b>
11.25am	Summary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short recap of previous lesson.</li> <li>Questions about why bear was out walking.</li> <li>Students offered many suggestions.</li> <li>11.30, student gave extended explanation of 'coming from the other direction.'</li> </ul>
Time 11.45 am	Read story to/with students

When used in conjunction with the next column, 'Progress of lesson' they provide pointers for later discussion. Note that the arrows shown below illustrate the links between the two columns. There is not any requirement that observers cover the sheet in arrows.

#### Example:

Time	Accelerated Literacy Strategy	Progress of Lesson
Start	<b>Low Order Literate Orientation</b>	<b>Clear goals articulated:</b>
11.25am	Summary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short recap of previous lesson.</li> <li>Questions about why bear was out walking.</li> <li>Students offered many suggestions.</li> <li>11.30, student gave extended explanation of 'coming from the other direction.'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For whole lesson</li> <li>For low order</li> </ul>
		<b>Discussion:</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From common knowledge</li> <li>That provides cognitive challenge</li> <li>Is pitched at age appropriate level</li> </ul>
		<b>Information taught:</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>About the whole story (including illustrations)</li> <li>About a specific part of the story (or illustration)</li> <li>Story read fluently and expressively</li> </ul>
Time 11.45 am	Read story to/with students	

### Progress of lesson and comments

#### Example:

Time	Accelerated Literacy Strategy	Progress of Lesson	Comments
------	-------------------------------	--------------------	----------



National Accelerated Literacy Program

Start 11.25 am	<b>Low Order Literate Orientation</b> Summary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short recap of previous lesson.</li> <li>Questions about why bear was out walking.</li> <li>Students offered many suggestions.</li> </ul> 11.30 student gave extended explanation of 'coming from the other direction.'	<b>Clear goals articulated:</b>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For whole lesson</li> </ul>	yes
Time 11.45 am	Read story to/with students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For low order</li> </ul>	yes
		<b>Discussion:</b>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From common knowledge</li> <li>That provides cognitive challenge</li> <li>Is pitched at age appropriate level</li> </ul>	yes often yes
		<b>Information taught:</b>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>About the whole story (including illustrations)</li> </ul>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>About a specific part of the story (or illustration)</li> </ul>	yes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Story read fluently and expressively</li> </ul>	yes	

This part of the sheet is made up of some headings intended as focus points for coordinators/consultants observing a lesson. They suggest points that are important to AL teaching but are by no means comprehensive. They will be discussed in more detail below.

The right hand column 'comments' is intended for a brief comment about whether the point mentioned in 'progress of lesson' occurred or not. The comment may be omitted or can be 'yes', 'often', 'sometimes', 'good' etc. The space can be left empty, for example, if no goals for the whole lesson were mentioned then leave a space. It is suggested that negative comments are not used.

## Interactions with students

Because interactions with students are highly significant in teaching Accelerated Literacy lessons, space has been provided for brief comments about them. All observations that could be made are not included but there is space for 'Other Observations'. (Record time to aid finding the interactions on film.)

### Example:

<b>Interactions with students</b>	
[These interactions occur throughout the lesson and are not specifically linked to a teaching sequence strategy]	
Questioning that promotes student engagement and access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preformulation used where appropriate</li> <li>Answers accepted positively and reformulated or reconceptualized</li> </ul>	often
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lesson paced effectively to keep interest of students</li> </ul>	yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flexibility to include students with different abilities in the lesson.</li> </ul>	yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistently positive interactions with all students.</li> </ul>	
Other Observations: 12.05 pm particularly effective interaction with student who was hiding under a desk.	

## 4. After the lesson

### Rationale

The final part of the support sheet provides space for points for discussion following the lesson. Different contexts may call for slightly different procedures depending on:

If a film of the lesson was made

If you are discussing the lesson immediately after it has been taught

If you are discussing the lesson later on in the day or on another day

However, while you may make various arrangements to discuss the lesson, always respond positively immediately afterwards.

### Guidelines

#### Example:

##### After the lesson:

Were the goals of the lesson achieved?

*Most of them were. Time spent on Low Order Literate Orientation took up more of the lesson than intended although the discussion that came out of it was excellent.*

What was the most positive outcome of the lesson?

*Highly effective verbal interactions with students (eg. 12.05 pm)*

What one change could the teacher make in their next AL lesson to make the lesson more effective?

*Refine focus of Low Order Literate Orientation to allow enough time for Joint Reconstructed Writing.*

#### What was the most positive outcome of the lesson?

This heading is intended to be a starting point for discussion after a lesson. There will be something in every lesson that was successful about it. Look for successful interactions with students, insightful teaching about the language choices in the text, successful outcomes for students where they have been able to achieve success in reading, writing, spelling etc. Ask the teacher to tell you how he/she felt the lesson went and what help he/she needed.

#### Were the goals of the lesson achieved?

The teacher and coordinator/consultant discussed the goals of the lesson previously. Now consider to what extent the goals were achieved and consider why they were or were not reached.

It is very seldom that anyone achieves all they set out to do in any lesson so it is not a criticism to note that not all goals were achieved. Very valuable discussion can come out of asking a teacher to talk about why they made decisions to spend more time on one part of a the lesson than planned or why they changed direction during a lesson.

Flexibility to take advantage of important teaching 'moments' is part of good teaching. Understanding reasons why teachers make decisions in the flow of the lesson help coordinators/consultants as they seek to understand how to develop AL.

**What one change could the teacher make in their next AL lesson to make the lesson more effective?**

Choose one element of the lesson to support. For teachers new to the program, it could be questioning techniques, or discussion about interpretations of the text or illustrations. For teachers who have been in the program longer it could be how to relate spelling taught in the lesson to other spelling knowledge or how to engage students in writing effectively.



## Part 2

- **Points to consider when providing support to teachers.**
- **Some ‘frequently asked questions’ (FAQs)**

### Points to consider when providing support to teachers.

The following notes provide some support for coordinators/consultants that may help when observing lessons and in discussions with teachers. Each AL teaching strategy is discussed.

#### Low Order Literate Orientation

##### Clear Goals Articulated:

##### For whole lesson

What is in the teacher’s head that students need to know?

Students need to know that there is an educational purpose for the literacy lesson so that they can participate in the lesson appropriately. They need to know what they have to do to be seen to participate appropriately.

Low Order Literate Orientation is the start of involving students in the goals of the lesson.

Consider:

- Whether the goal is appropriate for that lesson, for the book, for the age of the students. It is quite difficult to define a specific goal that is then carried through the lesson and to which all the teaching for that lesson is linked.
- The goal needs to be engaging, obviously worthwhile, educational, interesting.
- It needs to link to previous lessons, teaching sequences, and strategies.
- It needs to be leading somewhere.

##### For low order

As well as wider goals there will be one specific to just that part of the lesson.

Consider:

- Whether the goal focuses on what the class is going to learn or discuss about the text (and illustrations) for that Low Order Literate Orientation.
- How will this focus contribute to the rest of the lesson?

##### Discussion:

There will usually be questions and answers in Low Order Literate Orientation as they are part of the way teachers operate. Their significance for AL is in how easily students can answer questions, the types of answers they give and the way the teacher responds to these answers.

##### From Common knowledge

At least some of the questions a teacher asks will concern common knowledge about the text that has been discussed in previous lessons (how much possibility there is here depends on

how long has been spent on the text). If we consider common knowledge as a dynamic, growing, powerful tool available to every child in the class then we will look for:

- The teacher reminding students of what they have learned previously.
- Students answering easily and at least some students able to give extended answers.
- Common knowledge will be broadcast to all students through the teacher's reconceptualisation of answers.

### **That provides cognitive challenge**

Questions will be about facts and information in the wording of the text but also watch for:

- Questions that challenge students to read 'between the lines' and 'behind the lines' of the study passage or illustrations.
- Students that are able to draw inferences about characters' motivations
- Students that can make judgements or give opinions about texts.

### **Is pitched at age appropriate level**

Think of age appropriate levels in relation to discussions as well as for book levels. Look for:

- Discussion that would be considered appropriated for students at the age level of the class at mainstream levels.
- While it is good to explain meanings or unfamiliar words or concepts, look for discussions that respect the age of the students in the class.

### **Story read fluently and expressively**

- At the end of a Low Order Literate Orientation teachers read the text or part of the text to students. As a teaching sequence develops the students will often join in the reading or participate in some way with the teacher in reading. Look for fluent, expressive reading by the teacher even when students 'readalong'.
- Chanting or shouting the text from memory is not helpful in teaching reading for meaning or in modelling and teaching reading aloud.

### **High Order Literate Orientation**

High Order Literate Orientation always involves examining the language choices the author has made in the study text. To carry out High Order Literate Orientation the text needs to be visible to all students in the class. This can be in the form of a big book, on an overhead projector, a data projector or some other device that makes the text visible to everyone.

The students need to be seated where they can see and participate easily.

### **Goals clearly articulated and following from low order**

The goals that were laid out for the students in low order need to be picked up in high order and related to the wording of the text.

- Look for a statement of which language features will be the focus of the lesson and why.

### **Draws on common knowledge from other lessons**

As in Low Order Literate Orientation common knowledge about the text is the resource from which questions will be drawn.

- Look for evidence that the common knowledge is the foundation on which the discussion about wording of the text is based.

Early in a teaching sequence a teacher will cue students into the language choices the author has made and what readers can learn about writing techniques by studying these choices.

- Look for discussion that draws on previous work on language choices and their effect on readers.

### Identifies structure of text or refers to it

To reach a writing goal and talk about the text so that students see the techniques an author used to construct it, the teacher will identify some kind of structure in the study passage.

Look for talk about:

- Orientation, complication, resolution in younger students' books
- The structure of shorter passage in older students' books.

### Links passage to the whole story

Where a shorter passage is studied from a longer text the place of the passage and its contribution to the whole text needs to be discussed.

- Look for the teacher explaining the context of the passage during the lesson.

### Identifies appropriate language choices

- Look for interactions that focus on the actual wording of the text. Students may underline the language features identified on their own copy of the text, on the overhead of the text or on the big book but there will be some discussion of the actual words of the text central to High Order Literate Orientation.

### Discusses the effect of language choices on readers

- Look for discussions about the emotional impact of language choices and the possible inferences implied by them. An effective teacher will encourage students to offer suggestions, accept them and relate them to the goal of the lesson.

### Age appropriate discussion of language choices

- As mentioned previously, look for discussion that is aimed at the age level of the students.
- The language choices identified need to be chosen for their potential to teach students critical literacy as well as word meanings and grammar.

### Relates language choices to lesson goal

- Look for how the teacher weaves the discussion about language choices into discussion about the lesson goals.

## Transformations

### Focus on text as a model for writing

To implement Transformations, teachers use a 'sentence maker' or Transformations board. The text is written on cardboard strips and placed on the board where it can be cut up and manipulated. Transformations have the potential to lead to spelling, word recognition and 1:1 correspondence activities as well as having a possible writing focus. Both dimensions can be taught in one lesson or just one.

### Goal clearly articulated and linked to low and high order

- Look for a clear goal in the Transformations related to the overall goal of the whole lesson as well as to the immediate activity. Because there are different directions this

part of the lesson can take students need to understand what the educational purpose of their activity is.

### **Draws on common knowledge from this lesson and others**

Look for:

- teachers drawing on understandings established earlier in the lesson as well as in previous lessons.
- teachers asking cognitively demanding questions that relate to earlier conversation without preformulation (eg. asking 'why' someone would use those words).
- flexibility to restate questions and try again if students cannot answer demanding questions.

### **Writing focus:**

#### **Establishes a writing focus for Transformation**

#### **Cuts text into segments purposefully**

The text can be cut into paragraphs, sentences, phrases or words depending on the goal of the activity. Look for:

- A clear outline of the structure of the text
- A discussion about the place of the Transformation in the narrative
- Clear reasons for segmenting the text

#### **Discusses writing potential of these segments**

In addition to the above points, look for:

- A discussion about how writing techniques are exemplified in the wording of the text
- A discussion that includes turning words over and speculating on the effect they have on the text meaning.

### **And/or Spelling focus**

#### **Shift to word identification activities**

When the text has been cut up into single words word recognition activities and 1:1 correspondence may be the focus of Transformations. Look for the choice of activities and how effectively the students engage with them.

## **Spelling**

### **Focus on word analysis and decoding knowledge**

Spelling is the teaching sequence strategy where knowledge about English orthography can be taught. The analysis of words and spelling activities provide resources for students' writing and for decoding when reading.

#### **Goals clearly articulated**

Look for an explanation of what the educational purpose of the activity is as well as for more specific description of the words to be analysed.

#### **Words chunked appropriately and explained clearly**

Either the teacher will cut the words into appropriate chunks or the students will make suggestions for cutting the words into chunks. The choice of how chunking is carried out is a choice the teacher has to make depending on the understanding of the students. Either way, the reasons for cutting up words need to be part of the spelling discussion.

### **Links made to previously taught spelling knowledge**

Whatever words are taught in spelling, there should be links made between it and the overall spelling knowledge appropriate for the students spelling stage and understanding. Each spelling session needs to have links made to other words with similar patterns or previous knowledge taught.

### **Practice of known words and concepts built in**

Look for discussion that shows students drawing on spelling knowledge from other lessons. Students may be able to articulate why words are cut up in certain ways or offer other words with similar patterns.

### **Discussion of etymology**

There may be some discussion of word origins, their history and reasons given for unusual spelling.

### **Joint reconstructed writing carried out**

In lessons where joint reconstructed writing is carried out look for

- An explanation of the activity
- Joint discussion of the word functions, their meanings and effect on readers.
- Discussion of letter formation and fluency with younger students

## **Writing**

### **Using the techniques of good authors as models for students**

(If writing goals have been articulated earlier in the lesson they will be reiterated here and put into practice.)

There are many possible directions writing activities can take depending on the lesson goals.

### **Support for successful writing chose appropriately**

- Joint construction
  - Teacher and students work with a structure and technique taught from their reading to negotiate a story that appropriates that technique.
- Independent writing
  - The word 'independent' refers to students working without support on a writing task. The task may follow joint construction and be take the form of a workshop where students practice using the writing technique they have been learning. When students work independently the quality of their work will depend on the quality of their preparation for the task.
- Free composition
  - There will be occasions where students write an extended piece of text completely from their own resources. This is also 'independent' writing but could also be called free writing or free composition to describe the task of planning and writing without support. A teacher may set a topic or criteria for writing for this task.

### **Students able to engage with understanding of writing techniques**

Look for how students are able to carry out the writing tasks they are given. If they still need a lot of help to complete a task then perhaps they need different preparation for the task. Look at how teachers plan for and support the students that need most help in writing tasks.

## Interactions with students

The teachers interactions with students are instrumental in a student being able to participate as a competent member of the class. This section of the sheet is designed for use during the lesson to indicate the productive interactions with students or to identify where help is needed.

### Questioning

One of the key indicators of students recognising educational ground rules and responding to display their understanding is their ability to answer questions.

Teachers set up situations in which students can access answers and participate in discussions by preformulating questions well. Look for:

- Good decisions about when to preformulate
- Effective preformulation that assists students to answer questions competently.
- Answers accepted in a positive and encouraging manner.
- Flexibility in taking a students answer and reformulating or restating it into an acceptable answer.
- Reconceptualisation that broadcasts common knowledge to the class and shows the students why that answer was important.

### Lesson paced effectively to keep interest of students

This point refers to a teacher's sensitivity to their students and the balance between persevering until a concept is taught and overloading students with too much information.

Look for:

- Sensitivity to the age and interest levels of the students
- Command of the teaching strategies so that interest is maintained.
- The ability to choose activities focused on literacy to change the pace of the lesson if necessary.

### Flexibility to include students with different levels of understanding in the lesson

In many classes there are students that may have missed lesson, have less command of English or be finding literacy lesson difficult for some reason or other. A major focus of Accelerated Literacy is providing these students with the support to participate in lessons as powerful learners.

- Look for how teachers seek to include all students in the lesson.

### Consistently positive interactions with all students

Central to AL teaching is the understanding that students and teachers are participating in socially constructed learning. Students who feel marginalised because of their behaviour do not participate effectively in lessons. Look for

- How teachers handle students who present as 'difficult', inattentive or otherwise uncooperative
- How they ensure their participation in lessons.
- How they encourage and support them.

### Other observations

Note any other points that are connected with positive interactions with students in classes observed, particularly skilful interactions that lead to student participation.

## 4. After the lesson

### Were the goals of the lesson achieved?

Goals for lessons are seldom all achieved. This question is intended to be a query about what was achieved and why. Goals may not have been achieved because the teacher spent more time teaching a point that was difficult for students when it was not anticipated. Extra time used like this would be entirely appropriate.

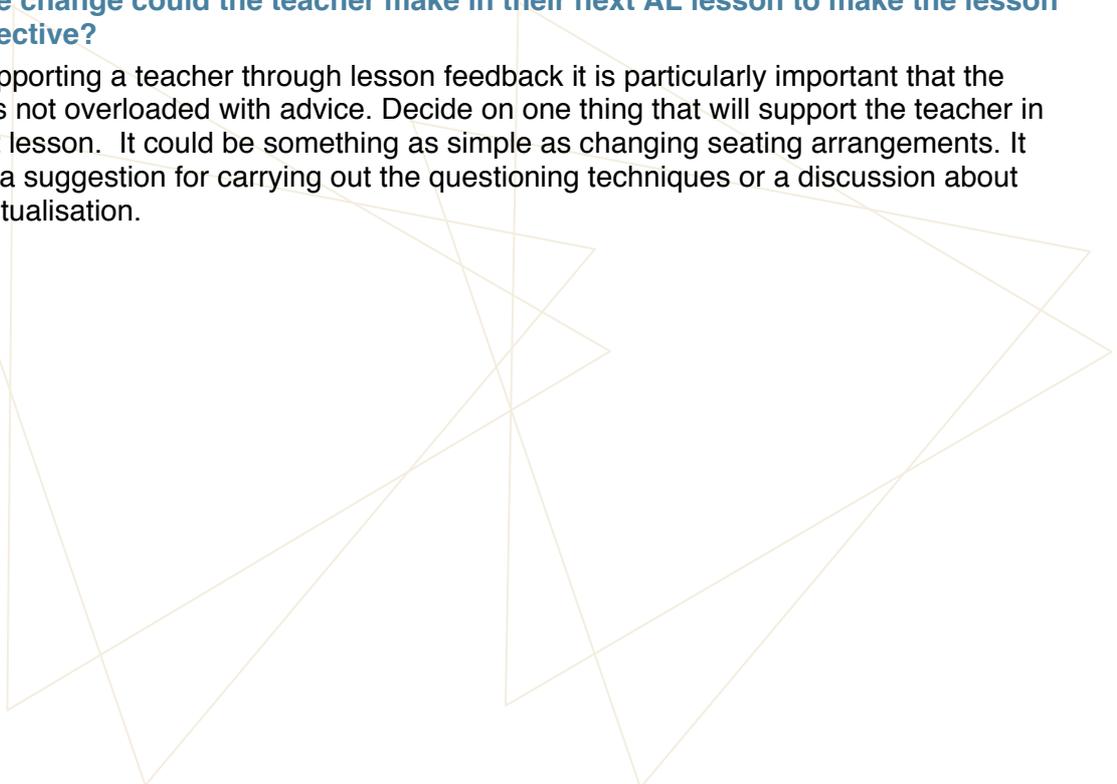
### What was the most positive outcome of the lesson?

Look for a point in the lesson that achieved particularly good interactions with students or some other positive literacy outcome.

Ask the teacher what they felt about the lesson. What did they feel went well? What did they feel they needed help with?

### What one change could the teacher make in their next AL lesson to make the lesson more effective?

When supporting a teacher through lesson feedback it is particularly important that the teacher is not overloaded with advice. Decide on one thing that will support the teacher in their next lesson. It could be something as simple as changing seating arrangements. It could be a suggestion for carrying out the questioning techniques or a discussion about reconceptualisation.



## FAQs

### ***When do I get to writing with my class?***

This question is posed most frequently by teachers who have just started in the program. It is an understandable question because AL places demands on teachers to change from a pattern of teaching where they set a task for students, explain the task and the students carry it out. The lesson sometimes seems to stretch out forever to someone in this situation. Students too react to a change in their usual lesson format. They sometimes don't feel that they have 'learned' anything if they don't have something written in a book.

Respond by suggesting that the teacher carries out the teaching sequence up to spelling and then does the writing tasks they have always done. Discuss what these were. Discuss how they could be integrated into the AL program until the teacher has completed the PD sequence.

### ***What about the good kids?***

An enormous anxiety for many teachers is providing demanding work for their most able students. Suggest that the questions you ask and the responses the 'good' students provide are models for the rest of the class. There is no reason why these students cannot be 'challenged' in the context of an AL lesson. They can be given different spelling tasks for example where students are already good spellers. They can be given additional writing tasks as well. However, it is important to ensure that all students are taught about the same text.

### ***How can I make time for writing?***

When teachers start teaching AL they can sometimes become 'bogged down' with Low Order Literate Orientation and High Order Literate Orientation to the extent that they do not have adequate time for other teaching strategies. This tendency is particularly reasonable considering that teaching these strategies is the main purpose of PD 1. To help these teachers, time each part of the lesson and observe whether Low Order Literate Orientation or High Order Literate Orientation can be shortened. Observe whether time spent on each strategy is well focused and purposeful then, make suggestions that relate to refining the focus of Low Order Literate Orientation to less of the text perhaps. High Order Literate Orientation can also be refined and more tightly focused. Too much information taught in one lesson can cause cognitive overload for students and may not be remembered anyway. Common knowledge (intersubjectivity) may not be being used effectively. Observe whether the teacher draws on the students previous understanding of the text and builds on that or whether they keep covering the same subject matter over and over again.

### ***How can I stop the students getting bored with Low Order Literate Orientation (or the AL lessons in general)?***

This question is one that indicates that teaching in AL lessons is becoming ritualised rather than principled. It is easy for this to happen as every part of the lesson has the potential to lose its educational focus and deteriorate into a habituated series of activities. No AL lesson should be boring. If it is then it is not AL teaching.

Start with lesson goals. Are they appropriate for the age of the students? Pitching discussion too low is boring.

Is too much time spent on asking questions that only require students to recall facts, particularly if the teacher asked the same question the day before. Questions about inferences, characters' motivations, posing questions that ask students to think about why information has been included in the text, why one language choice is more appropriate, image building, frightening etc than another are essential to keep students engaged and interested.

### ***What about the other genre?***

There is no reason why other genre cannot be taught along with narrative using the AL teaching sequence. The main reason why narrative is the focus of the program is that the fastest most effective acceleration of literacy development comes from teaching narrative. All that is needed to teach other genre is a well-written text at age appropriate level. The teacher then analyses the text for its structure and language choices and uses the AL teaching strategies to teach it. At present there are no teaching notes to assist teachers teaching other genres.

Experience has shown that teaching scientific genres for example require teaching about the subject matter that is the focus of the text, eg. a text about volcanoes requires considerable work on studying the topic. With narrative there is much less teaching of background knowledge.

### ***What about the curriculum guidelines?***

It is a class teacher's responsibility to align their teaching with their state or territory's curriculum guidelines or frameworks.

# Accelerated Literacy Lesson Support Sheet

## 1. General Information

Teacher:	Date:	Text:
School:	Year Level:	
Professional Development Completed:	1	2
Total lessons taught on this text	3	
Lesson filmed:	Yes	No

## 2. Before the lesson

Lesson goals:
Support goals:

## 3. During the lesson

Accelerated Literacy Strategy		Progress of Lesson	Comment
Time	Low Order Literate Orientation	<b>Clear goals articulated:</b>	
		• For whole lesson	
		• For low order	
		<b>Discussion:</b>	
		• From common knowledge	
		• That provides cognitive challenge	
		• Is pitched at age appropriate level	
		<b>Information taught:</b>	
		• About the whole story (including illustrations)	
		• About a specific part of the story (or illustration)	
Time	Read story to/with students	• Story read fluently and expressively	
Time	High Order Literate Orientation	<b>Focus on wording of the text</b>	
		• Goal clearly articulated and following from low order	
		• Draws on common knowledge from other lessons	
		• Identifies structure of text or refers to it	
		• Links passage to whole story	
		• Identifies appropriate language choices	
		• Discusses the effect of language choices on readers	
		• Age appropriate discussion of language choices	
		• Relates language choices to lesson goals	
Time	Transformations	<b>Focus on text as a model for writing</b>	
		• Goal clearly articulated and linked to low and high order	
		• Draws on common knowledge from this lesson and others	
		Writing focus:	
		• Establishes a writing focus for Transformation	
		• Cuts text into segments purposefully	
		• Discusses writing potential of these segments	
		And/ Or Spelling Focus:	
		• Shifts to word identification activities	

National Accelerated Literacy Program



Time	Spelling	Focus on word analysis and decoding knowledge
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goal clearly articulated</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Word chunked appropriately and explained clearly</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Links made to previously taught spelling knowledge</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice of known words and concepts built in</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of etymology</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint reconstructed writing carried out</li> </ul>
Time	Writing	Using the techniques of good authors as models for students
		[If writing goals have been articulated earlier in the lesson they will be reiterated here and put into practice.]
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for successful writing chosen appropriately: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Joint construction</li> <li>○ Independent writing</li> <li>○ Free composition</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students able to engage with understanding of writing techniques.</li> </ul>

### Interactions with students

[These interactions occur throughout the lesson and are not specifically linked to a teaching sequence strategy]	
Questioning that promotes student engagement and access	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preformulation used where appropriate</li> <li>• Answers accepted positively and reformulated or reconceptualized</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lesson paced effectively to keep interest of students</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexibility to include students with different levels of understanding in the lesson.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistently positive interactions with all students.</li> </ul>	
Other Observations:	

#### 4. After the lesson:

What was the most positive outcome of the lesson?

Were the goals of the lesson achieved?

What one change could the teacher make in their next AL lesson to make the lesson more effective?